

REGRETS

Unless you were born with a total understanding of alcoholism, had the desire to become an alcoholic, and had the capacity to make the decision to do so at birth, I cannot see how anyone can be held *responsible* for becoming an alcoholic. It would be like saying that you had a choice of whether to itch when you have poison ivy. To my knowledge, there is no definite understanding of what causes alcoholism. We are, however, *accountable* for our behavior, whether we are *drinking or not*, and most alcoholics that I've known have had an abundance of things, in their past, that they wish they could erase from the records. Some of those memories, we would like to take to the grave with us. These secrets, I believe, are the biggest hurdle that stands in the way of the *peace of mind* and the *feeling of wellbeing* that we all strive for. Most of these behaviors can be rectified by making amends and restitution using the twelve steps and by doing so; we have changed that behavior and no longer do those things/habits that we regret.

One of the promises of the A.A. program is that "WE WILL NOT REGRET THE PAST NOR WISH TO SHUT THE DOOR ON IT", and I believe I have reached that level of growth; however, I do have *deeds* in my past that *I regret having done*, and they can never be erased. I have discussed those things with trusted advisors over the years, and we conclude that, to admit and to be *accountable for those things is a good start*, but what can be done about those deeds that can't be mended? They can never be erased, but they can be resolved by replacing my old selfish habits with new, unselfish deeds, spiritual in nature, that allow me to repay my debt (one pebble at a time) to the many people, less fortunate than myself, that can use a hand up. This can be done in *a spiritual or in a material way, whichever the situation requires*. By doing this, *anonymously and without fanfare*, it allows me to balance the scales and to heal my conscience. I try to be kind and understanding; I do my best to be an asset and never a liability. I try to bring more to the table than I take away. I always try to be *honest with myself about my motives*. In these endeavors, *perseverance and time* will heal the guilt and shame.

I believe I will always have some regrets about having done those things, but *I will not be plagued by them*. Today I am right with myself and with the world. I am a very grateful alcoholic today, only because I contracted the disease of alcoholism in my youth, suffered desperation, forced myself to resort to swallow my pride, came to alcoholics anonymous, recognize the value of surrendering to it, and the desire to live a life at peace. I try to *go through each day without doing anything I REGRET*. Today I am happy, and content and I can't imagine ever having found an approach to life that could have come anywhere close to the life I live today as the result of taking these steps and practicing these principles in all my affairs and today, *I wouldn't trade places with anyone in the world*.